

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-2, 5, 7-8, 10-12, 14-15, 17-19, and 36-39 will be pending, of which claim 1 is independent. Claims 3 and 6 have been incorporated into claim 1 and, consequently, claims 3 and 6 have been cancelled. The remaining claims have been reviewed and, if necessary, revised to correct their claim dependencies in view of the cancellation of claims 3 and 6. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and withdrawal of the same is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

As noted, claim 6 has been incorporated into claim 1. In this regard, Applicants further note that claim 6 was rejected only over Kant et al. (U.S. 5,656,494) in view of Horn (U.S. 5,635,394). See the outstanding Office Action. Consequently, all other rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are moot.

Regarding Kant *et al.* in view of Horn, the Examiner acknowledges that "Kant et al. is silent as to whether structure (ii) may comprise specifically a 'manifold'." See page 6 of the outstanding Office Action. In an attempt to overcome this acknowledged shortcoming, the Examiner contends that "[i]t would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a manifold to the structure (ii) in the apparatus of Kant et al. because a manifold would allow for the system to be readily expanded to handle more air passage and accommodate more vessels." See page 6 of the outstanding Office Action.

However, Applicants note that the direction of gasflow in Horn is *downwards* whereas the direction of gasflow in Kant *et al.* is *upwards*. See, e.g., the Figures of Kant *et al.* and column 3, line 29 through column 4, line 28 of Horn. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that there is no motivation to combine these references in the manner suggested by the Examiner. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

For any and all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention is patentable over the cited art.

CONCLUSION

Because all rejections and objections have been addressed and overcome, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If any questions remain, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned attorney to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,
PILLSBURY WINTHROP LLP

By: Richard A. Stemberg #26,588 for
Mark G. Paulson
Reg. No. 30,793
Tel. No.: (202) 833-8491

PO Box 10500
McLean, VA 22102
(703) 905-2000

Enclosure: Appendix

APPENDIX TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 3 and 6 have been cancelled.

Claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) An apparatus for the separation of waste constituents from matrices, comprising:

- (i) a vessel having an interior for receiving matrices;
- (ii) a manifold for removal of gases emerging from said matrices, said manifold being positioned on top of said vessel; and
- (iii) a means for heating said interior;

wherein said vessel comprises one or more removable trays, said one or more removable trays comprising a bottom part and peripheral sidewalls extending therefrom, said bottom part being capable of supporting said matrices and being structured so as to define orifices in said bottom part, and said bottom part being capable of supporting said matrices.

5. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [3] 1, wherein said vessel has a bottom part and peripheral sidewalls extending therefrom, each of said peripheral sidewalls of said vessel being at least partly defined by said one or more removable trays.

7. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [6] 1, wherein said bottom part is a screen.

8. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [6] 1, wherein said bottom part is slotted.

10. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [3] 1, wherein said trays have a loading capacity of at least about 2.5 cubic yards.

11. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [3] 1, wherein said one or more removable trays have fork lift pockets.

17. (Twice Amended) The apparatus of claim [3] 1, comprising between 1 and 4 of said removable trays.

37. (Amended) The apparatus of claim [3] 1, wherein said means for heating is positioned in a manner to allow heat to enter said vessel at a position below said one or more removable trays.

END OF APPENDIX